

The Paraphrase of de. Erasmus of Rotterdam upon the third Epistle of John.

The ether unto the beloved *Stepus*, whom I loue in the truth. Beloued I wishe in all things, that thou prosperest, and iacob well, even as thy soule prospereth. For I reioyce greatly, when the brethren came, and testifye of the truth that is in the, how thou walkest in the truth: I haue no greater ioye, then for to heare home that my soules walke in veritie. Beloued, thou hast iustlyfully, wherefore thou hast to the brethren, and to drawnes, which beare witness of thy love before the congregation. Whiche brethren if thou bringe in wordes of theyr journey: after a goodly sorte thou shalt do well, because that sayngs named (as they were sayng) and told nothing of the *Scriptis*. Whiche sort of ought to create such, that we might be helpers to the truth. I wishe with the congregation: but the brethren, whiche I wishe to haue the goodnesse among them, accepteth us not. Wherfore if I come, I will bringe by a letter whiche be good, tellinge as we with many other wordes, neither in theyr word content. For one by be himselfe witness not the brethren, but also be witnesses them that would, and thrusteth them out of the congregation. Beloued, foloweth not that whiche is euill, but that which is good. We that be well, is of god: but that which is not good, sayng not god. Wherfore I wishe good report of all men, and of the brethren still, yea, and we sure I wishe also beate reioyce, and yet knowe, that our wordes are true. I haue many things to saye: but I will not saye yea and yea, nor no yea unto the. I will I shall surely se the, and we shall speake muche to muche, as we be unto the. The source followeth the. *Stepus* the source by name.



The ether unto the very louynge manne *Salus*, whom I loue sincerely. Dearly beloued, this doo I wishe for in my prayers of Iesu Christ, that like as thy soule doeth prosperously well in continuynge stedfastly in the Gospelles doctrine, euen so it may also doe prosperously in al other matters, Christ being thy good speede. For I haue conceaued no small pleasure of the saying of the brethren, whiche are come unto vs, and haue made repute of thy sinceritie, they beinge as true witness bearours, as thou truly folowest the truth of the Gospel, not onely in profession, but also in thy studies, as in all thy whole life. For there is no matter that maketh my harte more glad, than if I chaunce to heare, that my child, which I beget by the Gospel vnto Christ, doe folow the truth that we deliuered them. Dearly beloued, in that thou art diligent good vnto the Christians, whiche are there, and come thider as strangers, thou doest a dede worthy hym that truly putteth his trust in the Gospel, and loueth Christ. For they haue made repute of thy sinceritie before all the whole companye of the Christians. And thou shouldest doe well to, if thou wouldest bring those, whom thou receiuedst gently at thei coming, forth with like gentleness, thither as they would goe: like as they, which goe about Gods business, nor theyr owne, deserue to be increased of the that loue God hartly. For they went not forth to a market to increase theyr owne household prife, but to preach the name of the lord Iesu Christ, whose doctrine they distribute so vnto þe heathens, that they take nothinge of them for all that: so thineuse they maye bringe the more frute vnto Christ, for whome they labour: and if they so doe, god defende them from all suspicion of hauinge hande making. In dede it is becomynge for vs to receiue suche in to oure house, and to prouyde, that they

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the.iii. epistle

want nothing to the necessity of they: lyfe, that we may on some behalfe be partakers of those thinges, which are done by them: vnto the glorye of God. For so Christ hath promised, that he which receiueth a prophete as a prophete, shoulde haue the rewarde of a prophete. I haue written heretofore already vnto the congregacion, that is there, to doe the same, that I warte the of: howbeit Diotrephes withstandeth and doeth not receiue our monitions, hauing rather to be a ring leader among his owne, than of low degree, and a pure disciple of Christ: and hauing rather to be author of a new heresy, than to be a true follower of the olde euangelicall doctrine. Wherfore if I come vnto you, I will boarne hym of hys doings, wherof he thinketh peraduenture that I am not ware, while he being a naughty manne chaereth with malicious wordes agaisste vs, so thence he myghte take away our credence and autoritie from vs among you, whiche do exhort you to continue still in the doctrine of the Gospell. Neither bringe herewith content, he doeth not onely not receiue the brethren, but also forbidde them that woulde receiue them, and disturbe them in the congregacion. The mans forwardnes is suche. My good louinge brother, folowe not that whiche is euill, but that whiche is good. It is our parte to suffer them that naught are, but not to folow they: example. All are not the children of god, which haue receiued baptisme. He that declareth his faith by godlye deedes, is borne of God, for he resembleth the disposition and doctrine of hys father. He that dooeth wickedlye, although he professe God in his wordes, yet he doeth not: for all that see god truly: for he is true with moste purely scowred eyes of faith, which are blinded with the darknes of vices. Therefore auoyde the example of Diotrephes, a set Demetrius before thy eyes to do after. For his godhous is reported of all men, whiche although they woulde saye nothing, yet the thinge it selfe maketh repute of the mannes vertue. Yea and we our selues hauinge experience of hys sinceritie, beare witness of hym. And you know, that we beare true witness of hym. I haue also very many other thinges, whiche I was desirous that thou shouldest knowe, but I thought it not expedient, to put them in writing. I trust I shall come vnto the shortly: than we shall presently communicate of all thinges more surely and more fully. Peace be vnto the. Thy frendes that are here commendeth them vnto the. And salueth thou those frendes agayne, that are there, in they: behalfe diligently, and by name.

Thus endeth the third epistle of
John.